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INFO GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 108108

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/29/2018
TAGS: [KPAO](#) [PREL](#) [QA](#)
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE AL-JAZEERA TO RETRACT 9/11 FALSEHOODS

REF: A) DOHA 647 B) DOHA 687

Classified By: NEA A/S DAVID WELCH FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

11. (U) This is an action request. See para. 4.

SUMMARY

12. (C) Al Jazeera's decision to air the Italian-produced documentary "Zero 9/11" on September 3 and 10 has raised serious concerns here in Washington. The film presents conspiracy theories which attempt to cast doubt on the official U.S. Government version of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and on verifiable, widely accepted facts about these attacks. Therefore, the Department requests that post demarche Al-Jazeera's chairman, Sheikh Hamad bin Thamiir Al-Thani, to request an on-air retraction of the recently broadcast documentary "Zero 9/11."

BACKGROUND

13. (C) Post reported in ref A that Al Jazeera planned to air "Zero 9/11," a film that endorses conspiracy theories about the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Al Jazeera Director General Wadah Khanfar assured post that the Arabic narration of the film would present the film's claims as unsubstantiated conspiracy theories. However, when Al Jazeera aired the film in two parts on September 3 and 10, the voice-over narration did not discredit the conspiracy theories presented in the film. Post reported that Mr. Khanfar explained that Al Jazeera would air an accurate 9/11 documentary to balance the views contained in Zero 9/11. The Department understands that this has not yet occurred. In response to reftel (B), the Department has researched appropriate documentaries that accurately depict the events of 9/11 and has been in contact with post regarding these options.

ACTION REQUEST

14. (SBU) The Department requests post to deliver the points in paragraph 5 to Al-Jazeera's chairman, Sheikh Hamad bin Thamiir Al-Thani. Please advise as to the date of delivery and the reponse. POC is Matthew Blong, Qatar Desk Officer, NEA/ARP.

Talking Points

15. (C/REL TO AL JAZEERA) Begin talking points:

--On September 3 and 10, Al Jazeera's Arabic service broadcast in two parts an Italian film called "Zero 9/11." The film was essentially an effort to refute the official

explanation of the attacks of September 11, 2001.

---The U.S. Government finds the conspiracy views in the film to be outrageous falsehoods and Al Jazeera,s broadcast of them highly unprofessional and inflammatory.

--Mr. Khanfar also told us that Al Jazeera would air an accurate 9/11 documentary to balance the views contained in Zero 9/11. That has not occurred.

--The USG urges you to broadcast an accurate 9/11 documentary as soon as possible and is willing to provide the names of appropriate documentaries, if necessary.

--The USG urges you to issue a retraction, or to correct the record with an introduction to that documentary, noting that it serves as a corrective to the falsehoods contained in "Zero 9/11."

--We believe, as does responsible opinion worldwide, that the version of events laid out by the 9/11 Commission, which generally reflects the USG's view of what happened and who bears responsibility, is the authoritative perspective on 9/11.

--While people are always free to speculate and spin theories about events, responsible news organizations such as Al

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Jazeera need to clearly differentiate between fact-based documentaries and outlandish conspiracy theories.

--We look forward to continuing our dialogue on these issues.

End talking points.

16. (U) The Department invites post to provide feedback as appropriate. Your assistance is appreciated.

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